THE OBSERVER.

BY BEATRICE IRONSIDE.

The friend of Socrates, the friend of Plato,
But above all, the friend of truth.

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OF THE AUGUSTAN AGE IN ENGLAND.

The history of the rise of language and learning is calculated to gratify curiosity, rather than to satisfy the understanding.... An account of that period only, when language and learning arrived at its highest perfection, is the most conducive to real improvement, since it at once raises emulation, and directs to the proper objects. The age of Leo X. in Italy is confessed to be the Augustan age with them. The French writers seem agreed to give the same appellation to that of Lewis XVIth. but the English are yet undetermined with respect to themselves.

Some have looked upon the writers in the times of queen Elizabeth as the true standard of future imitation; others have descended to the reign of James I. and others still lower, to that of Charles II. Were I to be permitted to offer an opinion upon this subject, I should readily give my vote for the reign of queen Anne, or some years before that period. It was then that taste was united to genius, and, as, before, our writers, charmed with their strength of thinking, they knew that then they were sure to please with strength and grace united. In that period of British glory, though no writer attracts our attention singly, yet, like stars lost in each others brightness, they have cast such a lustre upon the age in which they lived, that their minutest transactions will be attended to by posterity with a greater eagerness than the most important occurrences of even empires, which have been transacted in greater obscurity.

At that period there seemed to be a just balance between patronage and the press. Before it, men were little esteemed, whose only merit was genius; and since, men who can prudently be content to catch the publick, are certain of living without dependence. But the writers of the period of which I am speaking, were sufficiently esteemed by the great, and not rewarded enough by booksellers to set them above independence. Fame consequently then was the truest road to happiness: a sedulous attention to the mechanical business of the day makes the present never failing resource.

The age of Charles II. which our countrymen term the age of wit and immorality, produced some writers that at once served to improve our language and corrupt our hearts. The king himself had a large share of knowledge, and some wit; and his courtiers were generally men who had been bred up in the school of affliction and experience. For this reason, when the sun-shine of their fortune returned, they gave too great a loose to pleasure, and language was by them cultivated only as a mode of elegance. Hence it became more enervated, and was dashed with quaintnesses which gave the publick writings of those times a very illiberal air.

Lestrange, who was by no means so bad a writer as some have represented him, was sunk in party faction; and, having generally the worst side of the argument, often had resource to scolding, pertness, and, consequently, a vulgarity that discovers itself even in his more liberal compositions. He was the first writer who regularly enlisted himself under the banners of a party for pay, and fought for it, through right and wrong, for upwards of forty literary campaigns. This intrepidity gained him the esteem of Cromwell himself; and the papers he wrote, even just before the revolution, almost with the rope about his neck, have his usual characters of impudence and perseverance. That he was a standard-writer cannot be disowned, because a great many very eminent authors formed their stile by his.... But his standard was far from being a just one; though, when party considerations are set aside, he certainly was possessed of elegance, ease, and perspicuity.

Dryden, though a great and undisputed genius, had the same cast as Lestrange. Even his plays discover him to be a party-man, and the same principle infects his stile in subjects of the lightest nature; but the English tongue, as it stands at present, is greatly his debtor. He first gave it regular harmony, and discovered its latent powers. It was his pen that formed the Congreves, the Priors, and the Addisons, who succeeded him; and had it not been for Dryden, we never should have known a Pope, at least in the meridian lustre he now displays. But Dryden's excellencies as a writer, were not confined to poetry alone. There is in his prose writings an ease and elegance that have never yet been so well united in works of taste or criticism.

The English language owes very little to Otway, though, next to Shakespeare, the greatest genius England ever produced in tragedy. His excellencies lay in painting directly from nature, in catching every emotion just as it rises from the soul, and in all the powers of the moving and pathetick. He appears to have had no learning, no critical knowledge, and to have lived in great distress. When he died, (which he did in an obscure house near the Minories) he had about him the copy of a tragedy, which it seems he had sold for a trifle to Bentley

the bookseller. I have seen an advertisement at the end of one of Lestrange's political papers, offering a reward to any one who should bring it to his shop. What an invaluable treasure was there irretrievably lost, by the ignorance and neglect of the age he lived in!

Lee had a great command of language, and vast force of expression, both which the best of our succeeding dramatick poets thought proper to take for their models. Rowe, in particular, seems to have caught that manner, though, in all other respects, inferiour. The other poets of that reign contributed but little towards improving the English tongue, and it is not certain whether they did not injure rather than improve it. Immorality has its cant as well as party; and many shocking expressions now crept into the language, and became the transient fashion of the day. The upper galleries, by the prevalence of party-spirit, were courted with great assiduity, and a horse-laugh, following ribaldry, was the highest instance of applause; the chastity as well as energy of diction being overlooked, or neglected.

Virtuous sentiment was recovered, but energy of style never was. This, though disregarded in plays and party-writings, still prevailed amongst men of character and business. The dispatches of Sir Richard Fanshaw, Sir William Godolphin, Lord Arlington, and many other ministers of state, are all of them with respect to diction, manly, bold, and nervous. Sir William Temple, though a man of no learning, had great knowledge and experience. He wrote always like a man of sense and a gentleman, and his stile is the model by which the best prose-writers, in the reign of queen Anne, formed theirs. The beauties of Mr. Locke's stile, though not so much celebrated, are as striking as that of his understanding. He never says more nor less than he ought, and never makes use of a word that he could have changed for a better. The same observation holds good of Doctor Samuel Clarke.

Mr. Locke was a philosopher; his antagonist Stillingfleet, bishop of Worcester, was a man of learning, and therefore the contest between them was unequal. The clearness of Mr. Locke's head renders his language perspicuous, the learning of Stillingfleet's clouds his. This is an instance of the superiority of good sense over learning, towards the improvement of every language.

There is nothing peculiar to the language of archbishop Tillotson, but his manner of writing is inimitable; for one who reads him wonders why he himself did not think and speak in that very manner. The turn of his periods is agreeable, though artless, and every thing he says seems to flow spontaneously from inward conviction. Barrow, though greatly his superiour in learning, falls short of him in other respects.

The time seems to be at hand when justice will be done to Mr. Cowley's prose as well as poetical writings: and though his friend Dr. Sprat, bishop of Rochester, in his diction falls far short of the abilities for which he has been celebrated, yet there is sometimes an happy flow in his periods, and something that looks like eloquence. The stile of his successor Atterbury has been much commended by his friends, which always happens when a man distinguishes himself in party; but there is nothing extraordinary in it. Even the speech which he made for himself at the bar of the house of Lords, before he was sent into exile, is void of eloquence, though it has been cried up by his friends to such a degree that his enemies have suffered it to pass uncensured.

The philosophical manner of lord Shaftesbury's writing is nearer to that of Cicero than any English author has yet arrived at; but perhaps, had Cicero wrote in English, his composition would have greatly exceeded that of our countryman. The diction of the latter is beautiful; but such beauty as, upon nearer inspection, carries with it evident symptoms of affectation. This has been attended with very disagreeable consequences.... Nothing is so easy to copy as affectation, and his lordship's rank and fame have procured him more imitators in Britain than any writer I know; all faithfully preserving his blemishes, but, unhappily, not one of his beauties.

Mr. Trenchard and Dr. Davenant were political writers of great abilities in diction, and their pamphlets are now standards in that way of writing. They were followed by dean Swift, who, though in other respects far their superiour, never could arise to that manliness and clearness of diction in political writing, for which they were so justly famous.

They were all of them exceeded by lord Bollingbroke, whose strength lay in that province; for, as a philosopher and a critick, he was ill qualified; being destitute of virtue for the one, and of learning for the other. His writings against sir Robert Walpole are incomparably the best part of his works. The personal and perpetual antipathy he had for that family, to whose places he thought his own abilities had a right, gave a glow to his stile, and an edge to his manner, that never has yet been equalled in political writing. His misfortunes and disappointments gave his mind a turn which his friends mistook for philosophy, and at one time of his life he had the art to impose the same belief upon some of his enemies. His idea of a Patriot King, which I reckon, (as indeed it was) amongst his writings against sir Robert Walpole, is a master-piece of diction. Even in his other works his stile is excellent; but where a man either does not or will not understand the subject he writes on, there must always be a deficiency. In politicks he was generally master of what he undertook; in morals, never.

Mr. Addison, for a happy and natural stile, will be always an honour to British literature. His diction indeed wants strength, but it is equal to all the subjects he undertakes to handle, as he never (at least in his finished works) attempts any thing either in the argumentative or demonstrative way.

Though sir Richard Steele's reputation, as a publick writer, was owing to his connections with Mr. Addison, yet, after their intimacy was formed, Steele sunk in his merit as an author.... This was not owing so much to the evident superiority on the part of Addison, as to the unnatural efforts which Steele made to equal or eclipse him. This emulation destroyed that genuine flow of diction which is discoverable in all his former compositions.

Whilst their writings engaged attention, and the favour of the publick, reiterated but unsuccessful endeavours were made towards forming a grammar of the English language. The authors of those efforts went upon wrong principles. Instead of endeavouring to retrench the absurdities of our language, and bringing it to a certain criterion, their grammars were no other than a collection of rules attempting to naturalize those absurdities, and bring them under a regular system.

Somewhat effectual, however, might have been done towards fixing the standard of the English language, had it not been for the spirit of party. For both whigs and tories being ambitious to stand at the head of so great a design, the queen's death happened before any plan of an academy could be resolved on.

Mean while the necessity of such an institution became every day more apparent. The periodical and political writers, which then swarmed, adopted the very worst manner of Lestrange, till not only all decency, but all propriety of language was lost in the nation. Lesly, a pert writer, with some wit and learning, insulted the government every week with the grossest abuse. His stile and manner, both of which were illiberal, was imitated by Ridpath, De Foe, Dunton, and others of the opposite party; and Toland pleaded the cause of atheism and immorality in much the same strain; his subject seemed to debate his diction, and he ever failed most in one, when he grew most licentious in the other.

Towards the end of queen Anne's reign, some of the greatest men in England devoted all their time to party, and then a much better manner obtained in political writing. Mr. Walpole, Mr. Addison, Mr. Mainwaring, Mr. Steele, and many members of both houses of parliament, drew their pens from the whigs; but they seem to have been over-matched, though not in argument, yet in writing, by Bolingbroke, Prior, Swift, Arbuthnot, and the other friends of the opposite party. They who oppose a ministry have always a better field for ridicule and reproof than they who defend it.

Since that period our writers have either been encouraged above their merits or below them. Some, who were possessed of the meanest abilities, acquired the highest preferments; while others, who seemed born to reflect a lustre upon their age, perished by want and neglect. More, Savage, and Amherst, were possessed of great abilities, yet they were suffered to feel all the miseries that usually attend the ingenious and the imprudent, that attend men of strong passions, and no phlegmatick reserve in their command.

At present, were a man to attempt to improve his fortune, or increase his friendship, by poetry, he would soon feel the anxiety of disappointment. The press lies open, and is a benefactor to every sort of literature but that alone.

I am at a loss whether to ascribe this falling off of the publick to a vicious taste in the poet, or in them. Perhaps both are to be reprehended. The poet either drily didactive, gives us rules which might appear abstruse even in a system of ethicks; or, triflingly volatile, writes upon the most unworthy subjects..... Content, if he can give musick instead of sense; content, if he can paint to the imagination, without any desires or endeavours to affect; the publick therefore with justice discards such empty sound, which has nothing but jingle, or, what is worse, the unmusical flow of blank verse, to recommend it. The method also, that our news-papers have fallen into, of giving an epitome of every new publication, must greatly damp the writer's genius. He finds himself, in this case, at the mercy of men who have neither abilities nor learning to distinguish his merit. He finds his own compositions mixed with the sordid trash of every daily scribbler. There is a sufficient specimen given of his work to abate curiosity, and yet so mutilated as to render him contemptible. His first, and perhaps his second work, by this means sinks, among the crudities of the age, into oblivion. Fame, he finds, begins to turn her back; he therefore flies to Profit, which invites him, and he inrolls himself in the lists of dulness and of avarice, for life.

Yet there are still among us men of the greatest abilites, and who, in some parts of learning, have surpassed their predecessors. Justice and friendship might here impel me to speak of names which will shine out to all posterity; but prudence restrains me from what I should otherwise eagerly embrace..... Envy might rise against every honoured name I should mention, since scarce one of them has not those who are his enemies, or those who despise him, &c.

THE MOST CRIMINAL NOT ALWAYS THE MOST UNHAPPY. A MORAL TALE; BY THE CELEBRATED *Helvetius*.

Want formerly assembled a number of men in the desarts of Tartary. Deprived of all, said one, we have a right to all....

The law which strips us of necessaries to augment the superfluities of some Rajahs is unjust. Let us struggle with injustice. A treaty can no longer subsist, where the advantages cease to be mutual. We must force from our oppressors the wealth which they have forced from us. At these words the orator was silent ; a murmur of approbation ran through the whole assembly : they applauded the speech ; the project was noble, and they resolved to execute it ; but they were divided about the means. The bravest rose first. Force, said they, has deprived us of all ; it is by force we must recover it. If our Rajahs have by their tyrannick injustice snatched from us even what is necessary, so far as to require us to lavish upon them our own substance, our labour, and our lives, why should we refuse to our wants what the tyrants permit to their injustice ? At the confines of these regions, the Bashaws, by the presents which they require, divide the profits of the caravans ; they plunder the men, enslaved by their power, and by fear. Less unjust and more brave than them, let us attack men in arms : let valour decide the victory, and let our riches be at least the price of our courage. We have a right to them. The gift of bravery points out those who should shake off the fetters of tyranny. Let the husbandman without strength or courage, plow, sow, and reap. It is for us that he has gathered in the harvest.

Let us ravage, let us pillage the nation. We consent to all, cried those, who, having more wit and less courage feared to expose themselves to danger ; yet let us owe nothing to force, but all to imposture. We shall receive without danger from the hands of credulity, what we shall in vain perhaps attempt to snatch by force. Let us cloath ourselves with the name and the habits of the Bonzes or the Bramins and encompass the earth. We shall see every one eager to supply our wants, and even our secret pleasures.

This party appeared base and cowardly to those who were fierce and courageous. Being divided in opinion, the assembly separated : one party spread itself into India, Tibet, and the confines of China. Their countenances were austere, and their bodies macerated. They imposed on the people ; they divided families, caused the children to be disinherited, and applied their substance to themselves. The people gave them lands, built them temples, and settled great revenues upon them..... They borrowed the arm of power, in order to make the man of understanding bow to the yoke of superstition. In short, they subdued all minds by keeping the sceptre carefully concealed under the rags of misery, and the ashes of penance.

During this time their old brave companions retired into the desarts ; surprised the caravans ; attacked them sword in hand, and divided among themselves the booty.

One day, when doubtless the battle had not turned to their advantage, the people seized one of these robbers : they conducted him to the next city, they prepared the scaffold, and they led him to execution. He walked with a firm step, till he found in his way, and knew again, under the habit of a Bramin, one of those who had separated from him in the desart. The people respectfully surrounded the Bramin, and conducted him to his pagod. The robber stopped at seeing him : just Gods ! cried he, though equal in crimes ! what a difference is there in our destiny ? what do I say !...Equal in crimes ? In one day he has, without fear, without danger, without courage, made more widows and orphans sigh, and deprived the empire of more riches, than I have pillaged in the whole course of my life. He had always two vices more than I, cowardice and falsehood : yet I am treated as a villian, he honoured as a saint : they drag me to the scaffold, and lead him to his pagod : me they impale, him they adore.

For the Observer.

DOCTOR CRAWFORD'S THEORY,

AND AN APPLICATION OF IT TO THE TREATMENT OF DISEASES.

(Continued from p. 184.)

Kirchen, the learned Jesuit, so far as my diligent researches have been capable of discovering, appears to be the first who suggested the existence of an animated principle as the cause of disease. His work was published at Leipsic, in 1671, by Langius, professor of medicine in that city. It is entitled a physico medical essay, on that species of contagion named the plague, in which its origin &c. are fully explained ; as also the operations of nature in the unusual malignity which at stated times appear, by the virtue and influx of heavenly bodies during epedemicks, as well in the elements as in the diseases of men and brutes.

With an accuracy of investigation highly meritorious he discovered by the aid of a microscope, as he believed, the nature and cause of pestilence, previously unknown. He alledges that this cause may be readily ascertained, by every one who will pursue the same mode of enquiry. He asserts that the plague is animated arising from the highest state of putrefaction, and is occasioned by innumerable worms, similar to invisible atoms, which propagate their species, and as by a fomes, produce the pestilence. They are often disseminated far and wide, and sometimes *remain* long concealed, adhering by their viscid nature, to woollen and other garments, and such objects as are fit for receiving them, into the most interiour recesses of which they readily find an entrance.

He adduces a number of testimonials in favour of his opinions from the most respectable physicians and surgeons who were his cotemporaries. Great expectations are entertained by these, that the discovery will be of lasting benefit to mankind, and that, in the course of time, it will be generally believed and universally adopted. His editor Langius, is sanguine in his hopes of the same result, and that it will terminate those disputes by which the medical world has been so long distracted. The above remarks are extracted from his preface.

Kircher in his address to the reader, informs us that when the plague raged in Rome, in 1656, he was shut up in common with the several religious orders ; that having before conceived the idea of writing on the pestilence, he embraced that opportunity to collate his papers, and having consulted with several of the most distinguished medical characters in his vicinity, they were unanimous in their opinion, that the publication of the work would be attended with general advantage. How much greater would be the benefit, if the more enlightened of the present age were to imitate that example !

The work is divided into three sections, these into chapters, and the whole is comprised in 143 pages, 4 to. small print. It contains many curious facts, and much ingenious reasoning, tinctured however with many fanciful opinions, resulting from the nature of his pursuits and the prevailing doctrines of his times. It is a very scarce work, another copy is not perhaps to be found in this country. As an object of much curiosity, it would be well worthy of translation. I shall take only a very transient view of it. He attributes the plague to exhalation, propagated from caves and subterraneous apertures containing the seeds of deadly maladies. These being disseminated in the atmospere, infect first the surface in the vicinity, and afterwards are carried to greater distances. Roots, plants, grasses, and trees bearing fruit imbibe the poison, and animate them with worms and various kinds of insects. The human and other animals resort to them for food, and are thus exposed to the influence of these pestiferous causes. His abstruse and laboured conceptions of the nature and effects of putrefaction are incomprehensible. It is greatly to be lamented that men of the brightest genius so often depart from the noble simplicity manifested by the creator in all his works; that they embarrass themselves with wild speculations, and lose sight of the regular plan by which every thing is conducted. He was evidently influenced by the scholastick learning of his time in which none were more deeply read. He was a profound antiquarian, and in his researches often indulged his imagination in supplying the defects of record. Hence where facts were wanting to support his Hypothesis, as has too commonly happened, he has had recourse to conjectures unsupported by any analogy

in nature ; and thus completed his scheme. In some of his flights he has resorted to the stars, and the conjunction of the heavenly bodies. In these notions he has been imitated even by some very modern writers. It is indeed greatly elevating the human character to presume his fate is connected with the celestial evolutions, and that his life hangs on the various aspects of venus, saturn and mars. Rational philosophy will ever discountenance such rhapsodies.

He attributes much evil from the vapour that is continually escaping from every living animal. These he deems animated corpuscles, which often generate the cause of disease and death. They are designated by an offensive odour, and this property is given them in order to apprise us of the danger with which they are attended, and to induce us carefully to avoid the places where they exist. When we are exposed to, we inspire them with our breath, and from the repugnance they excite, which is inherent to our nature, they create a disturbance which often extends to every part of the system, often giving birth to the most direful diseases.

In this way may be explained the sudden deaths that often happen, especially in times of plague. These animated corpuscles attack parts necessary to, and quickly extinguish life. The termination of the disease, in every case, whether on the commencement of the assault ; in the second or third paroxysm, or at a more distant period, either in death or recovery, depends on the greater or less malignity of the cause, as it respects individual power or number, the capacity of the system to resist, or the efficacy of the means used to destroy it.

From the depredations of these animalculæ, we may account for the horrid train of symptoms, which diseases so frequently exhibit. A description of them cannot be necessary, being present to every imagination, and of which a detail must be offensive.

It is unnecessary to follow him in his reasoning on the nature of putrefaction, and on the manner in which it is employed in the destruction of old, and in the generation of new bodies, being an hypothesis which has been long since universally exploded. Conceiving that the putrefaction of the old is necessary to new life, he asserts that there is no species of plant that does not generate a worm, proper for the consumption of its superfluous parts. Water elevated into vapour, the air, hail, and snow, abound with worms. Pliny discovered them in snow. Cornelius Gemma, in hail. Georgius Agricola, in the air. Worms, frogs and other insects have been deposited on the earth with showers of rain. There is scarcely any wood, fruit or moist body, that is not infested with worms that sooner or later destroy them.

As then no living body can be supported except by those things which possess the living principle, so no body can be corrupted except by those things which possess the same principle. If it be objected that insects are produced from the elements, air, water, and earth, it may be answered that no animated body can derive existence from inanimated bodies, considered in their simple nature. They are derived from seeds of a vegetable and sentient nature, dispersed through the elementary bodies. As then putrefaction has its source in living matter, this is afterwards animated as occasions offer; and thus according to a fixed law, that from whence it takes its origin, is restored to its primitive principle.

He has described a number of experiments at considerable length, by which he considers his several inductions fully proved. They afford an example well worthy of imitation, and shall therefore hereafter be fully detailed. If men of leisure, who are exempted from professional toils, were to engage in such a research, much profit might be expected from the result. The various phenomena which diseases present, and the process of nature in the institution of them will never be explained in a satisfactory manner, until their investigation is undertaken by those who are zealously disposed to prosecute the enquiry as lovers of science, and without any view to pecuniary emolument. They alone will afford any prospect of our having such a light thrown on that intricate subject as the human mind is capable of receiving. But if men of this description should heartily engage in the pursuit, we may rationally hope they will accomplish as much as has been effected in chemistry, botany, and natural history, of which last it is properly a branch. Until disinterested characters undertook the study of these sciences, they were as much obscured, as the science to which we would bespeak their attention; assuredly the advantages they may promise themselves, are far superiour to whatever has been gained in any other occupation of the mind. An increase of happiness to the whole of the human race, must await their laudable endeavours. That a knowledge of the cause is necessary to the removal of it is universally admitted, and who is there, according to any received theory that can boast of this knowledge?

As professional characters have hitherto made no proficiency in the attainment of it, we ought to despair of their future success. If any thing I could urge should happily lessen the prevailing opinion, that medical men alone should engage in medical pursuits; if I could persuade those that have talent and opportunity that nothing could elevate them higher in the estimation of the world, than an increase of information on subjects, which are of the first interest to every human being, I should experience a gratification sensible and lasting. J. C.

[*To be continued.*]

Mrs. Beatrice Ironside,

MADAM,

The following letter appears to me so revelant to the present military mania which rages amongst us, that you will much oblige by inserting it in your paper A CONSTANT READER.

NORFOLK.

Messrs. Printers,

Since the present military mania has seized the inhabitants of this once peaceable town, I have not had a moment's happiness. You must know the infection very soon spread itself into my family; my husband, who was what is called *a good sort of a man*, and would do *whatever I bid him*, is now become a very tyrant. If I ask him for a few dollars to buy a *new* gown, (you know, Messrs. Printers, a tradesman's wife ought to *go decent*) he makes no reply but *quick march*: If he wants his dinner, he bids me *order arms*, and his supper must be got ready in *ordinary time*. We had a few friends to dine with us last Sunday, and instead of saying grace decently, as he used to do, he called out *attention...handle arms*...and his grace after dinner is now *shut pans!* Yet if I offer to expostulate with him on account of his extravagance, he tells me he'll give me such a *volley* as shall *bring my rear rank to close order*. But this is nothing to the confusion it makes in the house; not a mop, broom or spit; in short, any thing that has a handle to it, but goes to rack. He mistakes every thing for a *musket*...and the servants are all as mad as himself.

It was yesterday I caught him in the back warehouse teaching what he called the *manual*. One negro fellow was furnished with a spit, another was *presenting arms* with the garden hoe, and the wench had *shouldered* my best hair broom; my son Jacky formed the *light infantry* at a distance, *trailing arms* with the poker, while my good man gave the word of command; indeed they had secreted themselves so effectually, that I should never have found them but for the noise they made in *marching* and *countermarching*; however, as I surprised them before they could *prime and load*, I very soon *broke the line*, and put the whole *regiment to flight*.

But this is not the worst misfortune that I expect from this rage for *manœuvreing*; for between you and I, I am afraid we shall manœuvre away all our customers. My husband has laid aside all his former modesty, and talks in the *military style of importance*. I heard him call the other day to a great man, whom he scarce before would look at, *how is't comrade?* And when alderman F. called to tell us he *had not forgot the bill he owed us of about two years standing*, instead of thanking the gentleman,

as a tradesman, you know, ought to do, he shut the door and cried out, *to the right wheel !* This very justice F's house keeper was obliged to be sent away, because there was no body to serve her : My husband was gone to *drill* ; my son was *wheeling to the right by divisions,* and *forming platoons* in the church ; the storekeeper was *exercising* with a party in the Old field, and the negro has been *priming and loading* in the pantry.

The only comfort I feel is, that my husband is not the only one who is thus altered. I happened to ask Mr. S. what news there was ? and he answered, *blue with a red collar,* and assured me *nothing became a soldier so much as white dimity pantaloons.*

Perhaps, Messrs. Printers, you are yourselves occasionally employed in handling a *musket* as well as in distributing the *primer and pica*...I expect you will order me to *right about face and retreat.* I shall therefore only add, that I shall, like my husband, but in a different sense, *support arms,* in the hope that this will be a short inconvenience ; that our enemies will be convinced by this universal display of patriotick spirit, that Americans have but one hand and heart in repelling from their coast those savages of Europe, those destroyers of all order and security, and the scourges of human nature.

[*Norfolk Herald.*] BARBARA BLUNDERBUSS.

For the Observer.

Mrs. Beatrice Ironside,

MADAM,

The object which you have had in view, in tracing the gloomy picture of the usual fate that attends genius, is too important to be neglected on any point. You will permit me therefore to repair an omission, which I have observed in your last budget, and which by the celebrity of its subject, appears to me to merit a place amongst the touching examples upon which you have so judiciously commented. It is *Christopher Columbus* to whom I would call the attention of your readers : in what I have to say with regard to him, I shall follow exactly the historians of various nations who have extalled his labours and his daring spirit, whilst they have recorded the disgraces that to the eternal shame of his cotemporaries, he was compelled to undergo.

To borrow as much as possible, the expression of these authors : A man of genius, say they, makes in his closet, solely by the calculation of attraction and weight, a discovery much greater than all those of his age. *He does not seek it, he does not*

see it ; but he guesses a new world. His assertions are laughed at ; he affirms that a new world exists, because he proves, that it must exist. After having experienced all the opposition, the vexation, and the derision, with which base jealousy oppresses real talents ; with which prejudice clogs every new discovery, and which, in short, the weak and the foolish lavish so unsparingly upon the bold enterprises of genius, because they hate every thing which shews them in their native littleness, *Columbus*, full of his idea, or rather inspiration, sets forth and realises what he had conceived.

He returns to Europe ; he brings with him new ideas, new riches, new objects of commerce and exchange, and consequently, the germs of a revolution, which only three centuries after, was to double the dominions of man, of genius, and of civilization ; as soon as Columbus had opened his career a crowd of adventurers endeavoured to raise themselves upon his reputation ; the attempt had been his alone, but they all believed themselves equal to him, and alike aspired to the advantages which might result from what he had alone atchieved..... "What," said these envious courtiers, "what is there so marvellous in having cut, like a madman, through the open sea, and met with coasts which barred further passage ?" Columbus, who alone knew what it had already cost him in secret calculations, what courage it had required to contain his crew, in the midst of the desarts of the ocean was obliged to endure the most mortifying humiliation, when at length one day wearied with the importunities of presumptuous ignorance, he took an egg, and simply asked, as if in jest, whether they could make this egg stand upright upon its smaller end. The thing appearing impracticable, Columbus lightly cracked the egg upon the table and set it upon the plan which he had just given. He then rose and left them, casting a smile of contempt upon the company, "*this was not difficult gentlemen,*" said he, "*but it was necessary to divine it.*"

After this, Cabot, a native of Bristol discovers the coasts which form a part of the territory of the United States ; and a merchant of Florence, *Americus Vespusius*, encouraged by a King of Portugal, came and bore away from the enterprising Genoese, the honour of giving his name to the new continent.

To have been deprived of this recompense was yet one of the smallest mortifications, with which this great man has been overwhelmed ; for who could believe it ? such were the clamours of the enemies of his glory ; such the ingratitude of the court of Spain ; such the folly of the publick equally *sheeplike* in every age and on every point of the globe, that after having discovered the continent of America, after having formed in its Islands establishments, which opened the way to fortune, to a crowd of his cotemporaries, he was treated like a criminal, and

led back to Europe LOADED WITH IRONS! Thus they at first cast on him the imputation of a visionary, and when success should have ensured respect to his character and powers, they accused him of treason. I have only a word to add upon the last days of Columbus; after having proved his innocence, after new voyages, new sacrifices, and excessive fatigues, he returned to Spain, and died at Valladolid, the 8th of May, 1806, having lived only 59 years, and passed an existence, rendered painful, even by the circumstances that have immortalised him.

In leaving the reader here to his reflections, I cannot however, suppress one with which the strange fate of so many illustrious men inspires me; it is most discouraging to the children of genius, to see by so many melancholy examples, that the only efficacious receipt through which a man of merit may be esteemed for what he deserves, is to die, and often to die of hunger, vexation and disgust, an exile, a captive, or by violent means. Thus Jupiter was just when he condemned the rash Prometheus, to be eternally gnawed by a vulture, for having stolen fire from Heaven to animate man, since this spark of genius, was to be to him a present so injurious and so fatal.

HERACLITUS.

For the Observer.

EXTRACT FROM THE JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE TO THE UNITED STATES.

We have been favoured with the communication of an Epistle addressed by a young literary stranger, who at present resides amongst us, to one of his friends, during a voyage to America; the French language has become so general, commercial relations are so continually multiplying between France and the United States; and the great interest which political events excites, draws the attention of our politicians, our men of letters, and our youth, so much towards this agreeable language, that we hope to give pleasure to many of our readers by the selection of some fragments from this piece, which bespeaks in its youthful author, no small degree of taste and talent.

Adieu donc, mes amis; adieu, vivez heureux!
Le bonheur doit pour vous exister surlaterre:
Vous n'avez point des dieux merite la colere
Votre cœur m'est garant du succes de mes vœux!

* * * * * * * *

Tranquilles dans lesein d'une aimable patrie
Continuez a gouter les plaisirs de la vie.

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* * * * * * * *

Tranquilles dans lesein d'une aimable patrie
Continuez a gouter les plaisirs de la vie.

Pour moi, que la fortune en de lointains climats
Appelle desormais, vous ne m'y verrez pas
Oublier les douceurs d'une amitie sincere ;
Mon cœur ne sera point captif dans l'hemisphere
Ou la necessite va retenir mes pas ;
Le souvenir souvent me prendra sur ses ailes,

* * * * * * * *

* * * * * * *

O Champs du Bas Medoc, si chers a ma memoire
Qui m'avez si souvent offert l'ombre & vos bois,

* * * * * * * * *

* * * * * * *

Chez vous je fus heureux jen'ai point d'autre gloire.
Qu'un autre vanteici ses moissons de lauriers
Raconte dans quels temps, sous quels vaillants Guerriers,
Dans les champs d'Austerlitz il montra son courage :
Pour moi, jestime peu cette vertu sauvage ;
Je hais l'homme assassin dans le soldat cruel
Qui peut tremper ses mains dans le sang fraternal.

* * * * * * * * *

Vivre heureux est le but dema Philosophic
C'est elle a qui je dus les plaisirs de ma vie ;
C'est elle qui pourra presidaut a mes jours
Dequelques fleurs encore en parsemer le cours !

* * * * * * * *

The author speaking here of the state of morals in America, says,

N'est—il pas corrumpu par ces hommes pervers
Qu'attire en ses climats, des bouts de l'univers
L'ardente soif de l'or qui sans cesse les guide ?
Tel on voit un ruisseau, formez d'une eau limpide,
Roulant sur des cailloux ses flots tumultueux
Perdre en se grossissant d'une source etrangere
La fraicheur de son lit, cette onde pure et claire
Ou le soleil aimait a repeter ses feux.

* * * * * * * *

The author promising himself to devote his days to the cultivation of knowledge and virtue, fixes the end of his career at a distant date, and terminates his epistle saying,

En mourant sans remords je mourrai sans allarmes.
Tel on voit sur les eaux ou regnent les autans,
Un habile Nocher, sur sa barque legere,
Offrant sa voile oblique a larage des vents
Lutter contre l'effort de leur souffle contraire ;
Et trompant leur fureur qu'il menage a son gre,
Arriver dans le port si long tems desire.

J. ROBINSON, PRINTER.